

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method of producing a fiber molded article having a casting cavity and a mating face with a sharp edge where the casting cavity and the mating face meet, the method comprising:

(a) forming a fiber deposit layer having a ridge or a pleat ~~thick-walled part~~ at or near an edge by a papermaking process, wherein the fiber deposit layer comprises a fiber material, the fiber deposit layer comprises a casting cavity and a flange, the edge is located where the casting cavity and the flange meet, and the ridge or the pleat ~~thick-walled part~~ is formed in a recess having a depth of 1 to 20 mm of a papermaking mold used in the papermaking process such that the ridge or pleat has a width of 3 to 6 mm and a thickness of 1 to 20 mm, and

(b) pressing the fiber deposit layer at the ridge or pleat to flatten the ridge or pleat into ~~thick-walled part to form~~ a sharp edge thereby producing the fiber molded article, wherein the sharp edge has a density of 0.8 g/cm³ or greater and is located where the casting cavity and the flange meet and the flange acts as a mating face when the fiber molded article is joined with a mating face of a second fiber molded article.

2. **(Previously Presented)** The method of producing a fiber molded article according to claim 1, wherein the fiber deposit layer is a wet fiber deposit layer and the papermaking process comprises providing a slurry containing the fiber material.

3. **(Original)** The method of producing a fiber molded article according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the step of pressing is carried out using a heated forming mold.

4. **(Previously Presented)** The method of producing a fiber molded article according to claim 3, wherein a forming portion of the heated forming mold is coated with a fluororesin.

5. **(Cancelled)**

6. **(Currently Amended)** The method of producing a fiber molded article according to claim 1, wherein the fiber deposit layer has a pleat and the pleat thick-walled part is formed as the fiber deposit layer is removed from the papermaking mold by bending a part of the flange near the edge.

7. **(Currently Amended)** A method of producing a fiber molded article having a casting cavity and a mating face with a sharp edge where the casting cavity and the mating face meet, wherein the fiber molded article is joined to a mating member, the method comprising:

(a) forming a fiber deposit layer having a ridge or a pleat thick-walled part at or near an edge by papermaking process, wherein the fiber deposit layer comprises a fiber material, the fiber deposit layer comprises a casting cavity and a flange, the edge is located where the casting cavity and the flange meet, and the ridge or the pleat thick-walled part is formed in a recess having a depth of 1 to 20 mm of a papermaking mold used in the papermaking process such that the ridge or pleat has a width of 3 to 6 mm and a thickness of 1 to 20 mm, and

(b) pressing the fiber deposit layer at the ridge or pleat to flatten the ridge or pleat into thick-walled part to form a sharp edge thereby producing the fiber molded article, wherein the sharp edge has a density of 0.8 g/cm³ or greater and is located where the casting cavity and the flange meet and the flange acts as a mating face when the fiber molded article is joined with [[a]] the mating member.

8. **(Currently Amended)** A papermaking mold used in the method of producing a fiber molded article according to claim 1 comprising a recess having a depth of 1 to 20 mm in which the ridge or pleat thick-walled part is formed.

9. **(Currently Amended)** A papermaking mold used in the method of producing a fiber molded article according to claim 1, having, in a papermaking portion thereof on which the fiber deposit layer is to be formed, a recess for forming the ridge or the pleat thick-walled part, the recess being formed by providing a base part of the papermaking portion at a position lower than a parting face of the papermaking mold.

10. **(Currently Amended)** A papermaking mold used in the method of producing a fiber molded article according to claim 1, having, on a papermaking portion thereof on which the fiber deposit layer is to be formed, a groove for forming the ridge or the pleat ~~thick-walled part~~.

11. **(Withdrawn-Currently Amended)** Apparatus for carrying out the method of producing a fiber molded article according to claim 6, comprising a papermaking mold for forming the fiber deposit layer and a receiving mold for receiving the fiber deposit layer from the papermaking mold, the papermaking mold or the receiving mold having ridge or pleat ~~thick-walled part~~ forming means for bending the basal part of the overhang to make the ridge or the pleat ~~thick-walled part~~.

12. **(Withdrawn-Currently Amended)** The apparatus for producing a fiber molded article according to claim 11, wherein the ridge or pleat ~~thick-walled part~~ forming means comprises (1) separation means for separating the outer peripheral portion of the overhang from the papermaking mold when the papermaking mold and the receiving mold are joined together and (2) a space-forming portion for providing a space between the papermaking mold and the receiving mold in which the basal part is bent.

13. **(Withdrawn-Currently Amended)** A fiber molded precursor used in the production of a fiber molded article having a mating face with an edge, the mating face being adapted to be joined with a mating fiber molded article or a mating member, comprising a wet fiber deposit layer formed from a slurry containing a fiber material by papermaking processing and having a pleat ~~thick-walled part~~ formed by partly bending the fiber deposit layer along or near the edge of the fiber deposit layer corresponding to the edge of the fiber molded article.

14. **(Withdrawn)** A fiber molded article obtained by forming a fiber deposit layer containing a fiber material by papermaking processing and pressing the fiber deposit layer, the fiber molded article having a sharp edge where two faces thereof meet.

15. **(Withdrawn)** The fiber molded article according to claim 14, wherein the edge has a curvature radius of 1 mm or smaller.

16. (Withdrawn) A fiber molded article having a mating face with a sharp edge, the mating face being adapted to closing against another fiber molded article to form a cavity.

17. (Withdrawn) The fiber molded article according to claim 16, the edge of the mating face has a curvature radius of 1 mm or smaller.

18-19. (Cancelled)

20. **(Currently Amended)** The method of producing a fiber molded article according to claim 1, wherein the papermaking mold has a papermaking portion corresponding to a shape of the fiber deposit layer, a parting face and a base part corresponding to an upper surface of the flange of the fiber deposit layer, and wherein a basal part of the flange is bent to form the pleat ~~thick-walled part~~ at or near the edge of the fiber deposit layer when the fiber deposit layer is released from the papermaking mold, and wherein the recess is formed by providing the base part of the papermaking mold at a position lower than that of the parting face.

21. **(Currently Amended)** The method of producing a fiber molded article according to claim 7, wherein the papermaking mold has a papermaking portion corresponding to a shape of the fiber deposit layer, a parting face and a base part corresponding to an upper surface of the flange of the fiber deposit layer, and wherein a basal part of the flange is bent to form the pleat ~~thick-walled part~~ at or near the edge of the fiber deposit layer when the fiber deposit layer is released from the papermaking mold, and wherein the recess is formed by providing the base part of the papermaking mold at a position lower than that of the parting face.